DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 121 721 SP 009 981

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TITLE The Center Concept in Southern West Virginia.
INSTITUTION Mercer County Teacher Education Center, Princeton, W. Va.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 32p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Conferences; Cooperating Teachers; *Educational Coordination; Inservice Programs; Inservice Teacher Education; Preservice Education; *Professional Continuing Education; *Teacher Centers; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *West Virginia

ABSTRACT

This publication describes the history, setting, governance, objectives, and programs of the Mercer County Teacher Education Center. It is stated that the center is a consortium of a local school system, two colleges, and the West Virginia Department of Education and is designed to enhance the implementation of effective teacher preparation programs. The section on governance contains an organizational chart and the by-laws of the center. The programs described are (1) preservice experiences, (2) inservice/continuing education, (3) suggestions for supervising teachers, and (4) conferences. (Author/RC)

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THE CENTER CONCEPT

in

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Edited by
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MERCER COUNTY TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER
1976

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FOREWORD

The history of educational development in the United States displays an extensive record of innovations which have been hailed by educators with enthusiasm, gained a fleeting popularity, and have been abandoned in favor of other innovations. A keystone of education has been that of professional teacher training. The quality of a teacher's education is directly linked to the teacher's quality of teaching. The teacher education center concept is an educational innovation of enduring value.

The importance of teaching extends and influences all areas of life and society. Teaching is a means to innovate and to enlighten, to create clarity amidst confusion, tenderness amidst callousness, relatedness amidst isolation and hope amidst despair. Education is fundamental to democracy and the teacher is fundamental to education. The Mercer County Teacher Education Center was developed and exists solely for the benefit of teacher training. It is a salient symbol of cooperation of the public schools and higher education with each being responsive to the other's needs for producing highly trained and competent professionals.

The society we expect our pupils to become a part of will be open, compassionate and productive to the degree our schools are. And our schools will be to the extent our teachers are. These goals can be achieved if efforts are continued to develop teacher training programs based upon openness, compassion and productiveness through such concepts as the teacher education center.

The future health of our society depends in a special way on the teachers of the next generation. If they are to produce free citizens, able to cope with the challenges of the times, they must have had the best possible education in every sense of the term. It is the task of the public schools and the colleges to work toward the goal of providing free, vigorous individuals that can grow to the highest levels of teaching proficiency.

C. D. Lilly, Superintendent
Mercer County Schools
Princeton, West Virginia 24740
January, 1976

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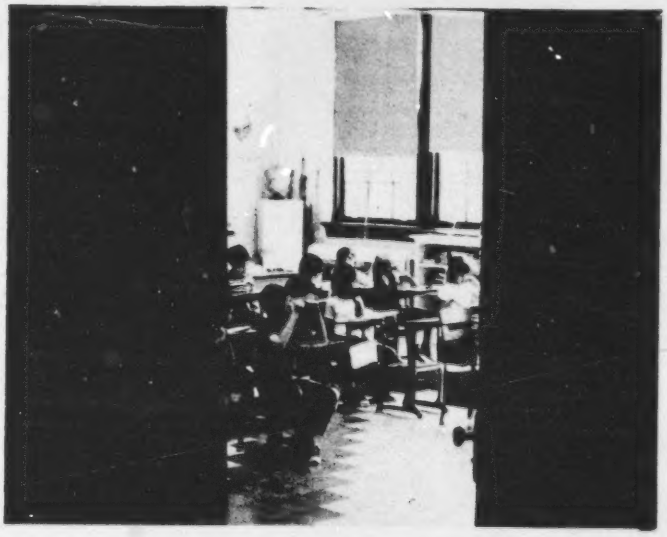
OPEN DOORS

In and out
Through the doors of opportunity
Pass the many
Who come to learn from each other.

Pupils in their appointed places;
Teachers in theirs.
Who learns from whom?
Which is teacher and which is student?
Perhaps the difference is only the size of the chairs.

Open these doors that others may come
And share with us;
That we may learn from them
And they from us.



Learning; Teaching;
Sharing; Reaching.

Student; Teacher;
Student Teacher;
Tutor; Aide;
Distinctions fade.

All; Each;
Learn; Teach.

In and out
Through the doors of opportunity
Pass the many
Who come to learn from each other.

J. Kaufman

HISTORY

The center concept in West Virginia began with the efforts of individuals who were concerned about teacher education. These efforts, along with endeavors in other states, culminated in a federally funded teacher education project: Multi-State Teacher Education Project (M-STEP), the purpose of which was to:

> strengthen the capacity of state departments of education to provide leadership in the development of joint responsibility between local education agencies and teacher education institutions in the preparation of professional personnel, with emphasis on laboratory experiences in elementary and secondary schools.

The specific goals of the M-STEP project, funded under Title V, ESEA-1965, by seven states (Florida, Maryland, Michigan, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, and West Virginia) were to:

a. Strengthen laboratory experiences.
b. Explore the uses of video processes in teacher education.
c. Develop new intrastate patterns of organization in teacher education.
d. Promote greater interstate cooperation.

M-STEP in West Virginia attempted improvement of laboratory experiences in teacher preparation through the development of a Pilot Center for Student Teaching. In the initial phase of the project, the Pilot Center was established in cooperation with the Kanawha County School System.

The Division of Teacher Preparation and Professional Standards of the West Virginia Department of Education received additional funds from ESEA-Title V, administered through the M-STEP Project, in order that other areas of the state might be informed regarding the experiences resulting from the efforts of the Pilot Center and the establishment of the Kanawha County Center. These funds made possible a series of meetings of institutions in the state which prepare teachers and the public school systems which cooperate with them in their student teaching programs.

One such meeting (November 4, 1968) involved two state colleges - Bluefield State College and Concord College – and leaders from two county school systems cooperating with the colleges' student teaching programs: Mercer County, West Virginia, and Tazewell County, Virginia.

As a result of this meeting, plans for the formation of a student teaching center in Mercer County proceeded rapidly. Legislation to permit county boards of education and colleges to commit funds to establish joint projects was passed by the West Virginia Legislature. On July 1, 1969, the Mercer County Teacher Education Center was founded by action of the Mercer County Board of Education, Bluefield State College, and Concord

College. The Center, from its inception, has been committed to the improvement of teacher education. Forward-looking efforts of local educational leadership have made possible the cooperative establishment of a highly effective design for the implementation of mutally supportive teacher education approaches.

While the history of the Mercer County Teacher Education Center may best be characterized as a reflection of local action to serve local needs, the early establishment of this Center in the Teacher Education Center movement assured some recognition as a trend-setting model. If, indeed, there is one identifiable trend in the history of this Center, it has been that local direction applied to clearly identified local needs has contributed much to the achievement of Center objectives. The desire of the Center to focus on specified objectives rather than to seek a broadly diversified service agency role has been a priority of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.

Considerable impetus to the growth and development of the Teacher Education Center concept was provided in 1972 when the West Virginia Legislature appropriated monies for the establishment of a statewide system of Centers. This additional support has made possible a more rapid development of programs, a higher level of service, and a greater degree of stability and acceptance. The West Virginia Department of Education has been supportive of the Center concept, and the establishment of a state-wide network is approaching reality.

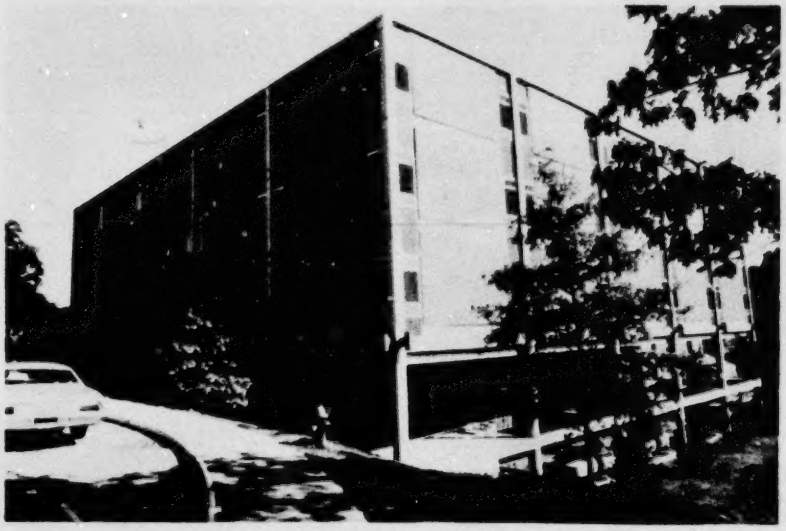
At the present level of development, the Mercer County Teacher Education Center has emerged as a coordinating agency, bringing together the personnel and structure of diverse institutions with a common concern for the strengthening of teacher education. As a forum for discussion, design, and implementation of educational opportunities, the Center has been eminently successful in achieving this purpose. The mutual support of the participating membership has opened doors of understanding and opportunity, the benefits of which are beyond measure.

SETTING

The Mercer County Teacher Education Center is a consortium designed to coordinate the efforts of a group of associated institutions involved in the preparation of teachers. Colleges, public schools, and the West Virginia Department of Education have joined together in this Center to implement programs designed to provide maximum opportunities for professional development.

From offices provided by the Mercer County School System and located in the Professional Building, Princeton, West Virginia, this Center furnishes the administrative organization to implement the collaborative efforts of Bluefield State College, Concord College, Mercer County Schools, and the West Virginia Department of Education in their identification, refinement, and development of roles and responsibilities in teacher training. The close association of these agencies within this Center provides the opportunity for a complete exchange of views which is necessary for the implementation of innovative programs.

Although the placement of student teachers through the Center is limited to Mercer County, the Teacher Education Center provides many regional services, particularly the placement of pre-student teachers for laboratory experiences and inservice opportunities for all levels of personnel. The major area of professional involvement is best described as Regional Education Service Agency, Region I (RESA-I); however, some programs have included other West Virginia counties and two contiguous Virginia counties. Research and evaluation instruments are regularly administered to assess needs and to measure the impact of Center services.



BLUEFIELD STATE COLLEGE

CONCORD COLLEGE

GOVERNANCE

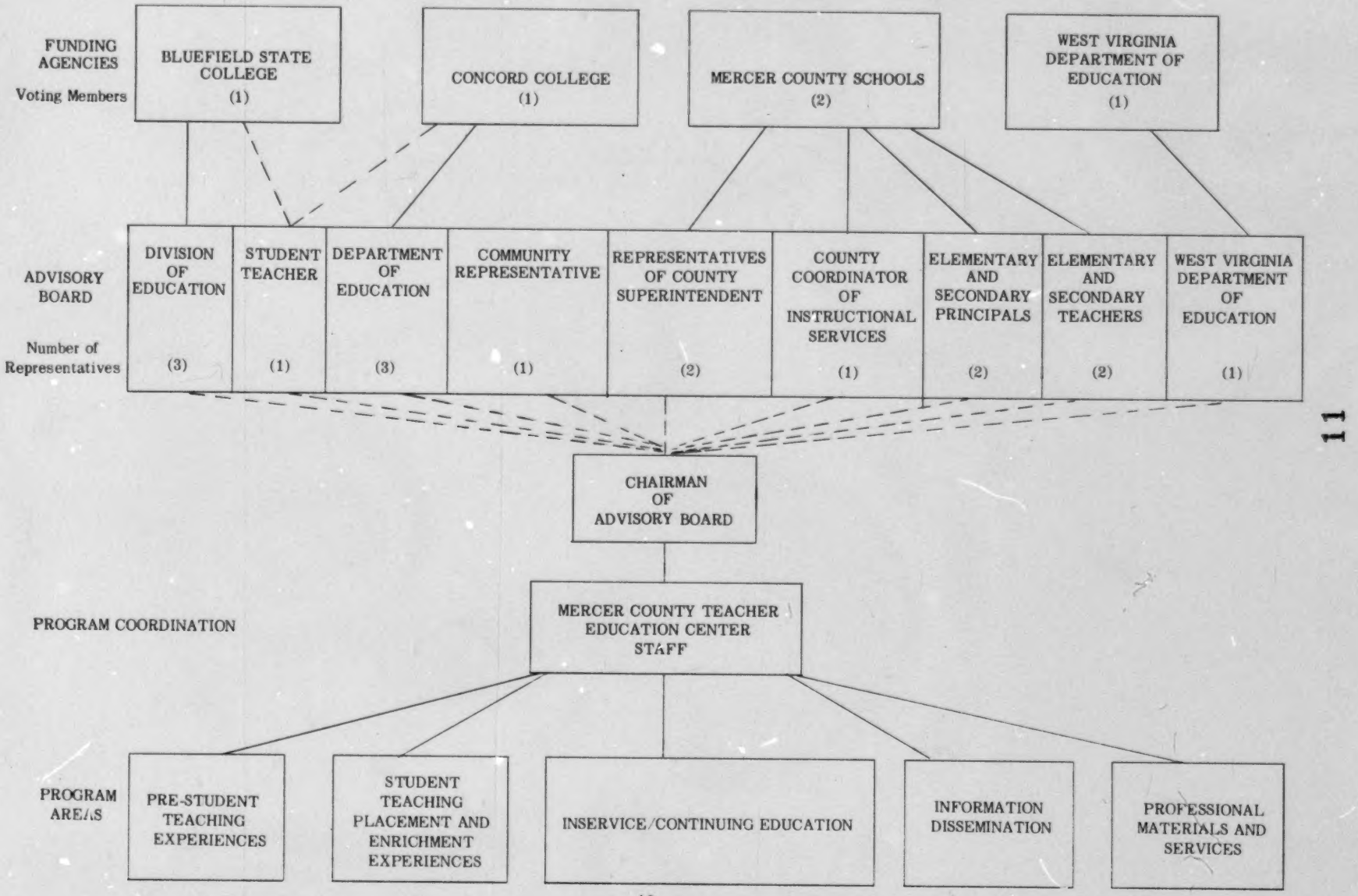
Governance of the Center is vested in an Advisory Committee appointed by the funding agencies. The Advisory Committee establishes broad policies and major objectives of the Center, which are implemented by the Center staff. The Mercer County Schools serves as the fiscal agent for the Center. The availability of personnel from participating institutions creates a body of specialists whose expertise continues to contribute much to the success of this cooperative effort.

Common concerns for improving teacher preparation, the expertise of local educators, and utilization of the coordinating functions of the Center have been combined in an effective design for educational development.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

GOVERNANCE

MERCER COUNTY TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER



MERCER COUNTY TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER
By-Laws

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of this body shall be the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.

ARTICLE II
PHILOSOPHY

The Mercer County Teacher Education Center is convinced that teacher education functions best in a climate whereby colleges, the West Virginia Department of Education, county school systems, and local communities contribute to the implementation of effective teacher preparation programs.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

The current composition of the Mercer County Teacher Education Center includes Bluefield State College, Concord College, Mercer County Schools, and the West Virginia Department of Education. Each contributes financially to the support of the Center.

ARTICLE IV
THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cooperation and thoughtful dialogue are essential to the center concept of teacher education. To provide the vehicles of action and communication, the Advisory Committee for the Center must function in a meaningful and professional manner.

Composition

1. The Committee is composed of the following representation:
   A. Voting Representation
      1. One member from each participating institution of higher education which contributes to the fiscal maintenance of the Center shall be appointed by said institution as long as said institution meets stated membership requirements.
      2. One representative shall be from the West Virginia Department of Education.
      3. Two members shall be designated by the Superintendent of Mercer County Schools.
   B. Non-Voting Representation
      1. Each participating institution of higher education shall select two instructional staff members – one elementary and one secondary – who shall serve a two-year term.
      2. The Coordinator of Instructional Services, Mercer County Schools, shall be a permanent member of this committee.
      3. One elementary and one secondary principal working in the Center teacher-training programs shall be selected for a one-year membership by the elementary and secondary principals organizations.
      4. One elementary and one secondary teacher shall also be chosen for a one-year membership.
      5. A representative from the community-at-large shall be appointed by the Advisory Committee for a one-year term.
      6. A student representative shall be selected from participating institutions of higher education. Each institution shall be represented on alternate semesters.

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS

The Committee shall elect from its membership such officers as it deems necessary. However, it must annually elect a chairman from the voting membership, who will fulfill the usual duties performed through the office of chairman.

ARTICLE VI
GOVERNANCE

The Mercer County Teacher Education Center shall be governed by the Advisory Committee which is responsible for the formulation and implementation of decisions pertaining to teacher preparation.

SECTION I ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

a. The Advisory Committee will meet monthly on the third Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.
b. Responsibility for the preparation of the agenda rests with the chairman and the Coordinator. The Center Coordinator will send notices and the agenda to all committee members the week preceding the meeting.
c. Robert's **Rules of Order** shall serve as the basic format of organization.
d. A change in by-laws may be presented at any meeting of the Advisory Committee; formal voting, however, must be delayed until the next meeting.
e. The Committee shall formulate policy which is deemed appropriate for the operation of the Teacher Education Center.
f. The Committee shall provide general supervision of the Center teacher education program including the approval of all experimental programs and the admission of prospective student teachers from institutions of higher education not currently represented on the Committee. Whenever possible, no institutions of higher education will be refused an opportunity to utilize the Center if such institution is approved by the West Virginia Department of Education as eligible to prepare teachers or if the institution is located in another state and such institution possesses NCATE accreditation. Other institutions of higher education are encouraged to apply to the Center and their applications will be evaluated by the Committee.

SECTION II OFFICERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Chairman

1. The chairman shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the voting membership of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.
2. The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Committee.
3. The chairman shall act on the behalf of the Committee for the immediate supervision of the activities of the Coordinator.

SECTION III COMMITTEES

Special committees may be appointed by the chairman with the approval of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.

Standing committees shall include:

1. Inservice Committee
2. Preservice Committee
3. Budget Committee
4. Field-Service Committee

ARTICLE VII
CENTER STAFF

A. Coordinator

1. The Coordinator shall be selected by a majority vote of the voting membership of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center and from candidates proposed by the Committee chairman or by nomination from a Committee member.
2. The Coordinator shall administer Center policy.
3. The Coordinator of the Mercer County Teacher Education Center shall serve as secretary to the Advisory Committee.

B. The Assistant Coordinator

1. The Assistant Coordinator shall be selected by a majority vote of the voting membership of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center and from candidates proposed by the Committee chairman or by nomination from a Committee member.

2. The Assistant Coordinator shall be responsible to the Center Coordinator who administers the policies of the Advisory Committee.
3. The Assistant Coordinator shall implement the provisions of Center policy in regard to the public school tutorial and college-aide program on a regional basis.
4. The Assistant Coordinator shall assist the Center Coordinator in the preparation of reports, brochures, and other publications relative to the pre-professional program and in the implementation of Center inservice programs.

C. The Center Secretary

1. The Center secretary shall be selected by a majority vote of the voting membership of the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center and from candidates proposed by the Committee chairman or by nomination from a Committee member.
2. The duties of the secretary shall include the preparation of materials necessary for communication and dissemination.

ARTICLE VIII
PRESERVICE EXPERIENCES

The Center shall arrange preservice experiences as designated by the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.

All preservice placements are to be made by the Center Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator after approval by the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center. Lists of completed placements shall be sent to the colleges and the superintendents. Each participating principal will receive an accurate confirmation of placements for his school and a calendar of Center Activities. Each supervising/cooperating teacher, following initial contact by the Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator and the principal, will receive pertinent information from the Center.

After placement, changes shall be made only following a cooperative agreement by the participating agencies. All changes must be made through the Center Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator.

ARTICLE IX
INSERVICE PROGRAMS

Inservice programs shall be arranged by the Center on a regional basis for new supervising teachers, supervising teachers, cooperating teachers, and principals as determined by the Advisory Committee to the Mercer County Teacher Education Center.

ARTICLE X
FINANCING

A. The Mercer County Board of Education shall serve as fiscal agent for the Center.
B. Each member institution shall pay an annual fee of $5,000.00.
C. West Virginia Department of Education shall provide additional funds for support and maintenance.
D. Each supervising teacher shall be paid according to the level of endorsement and the prorated assignment.
E. Building principals shall receive $5.00 per student teacher on a prorated basis.

ARTICLE XI
EVALUATION

The Mercer County Teacher Education Center shall engage in a continuous evaluation program, both internal and external.

In the internal evaluation, all Center activities shall be evaluated by informal evaluations. Participants will include those involved in the preservice and inservice programs. Complied results will be distributed to all members of the Advisory Committee. The results shall be used for program revisions and as guidelines for future in-service programs.

An external evaluation of the Center shall be made every three years.

CURRENT CENTER OBJECTIVES

Administrative Objectives

The Center will:

1. facilitate the assignment of student teachers through a planned and coordinated system of recruitment and selection of qualified supervising teachers.

2. broaden existing preservice enrichment programs for prospective teachers to strengthen personal and professional growth and development.

3. continue regional involvement in the Center by:
   a. providing placement and experiences for pre-student teachers in public school situations or community agencies.
   b. establishing an orientation program for teachers currently participating in the pre-student teacher program.
   c. developing a program designed to enhance the competencies of supervising teachers.
   d. providing inservice/continuing education programs for participants involved in Center programs.

4. establish objectives to intensify each program component and provide for meaningful involvement of all personnel.

5. engage in research and development, thereby promoting changes in educational programs based upon a Center evaluation, careful experimentation, and continuous evaluation of current programs.

6. establish the climate and cooperative relationship which will encourage future affiliation of other institutions of higher education in the area with the Teacher Education Center through open communication and involvement with programs related to teacher education.

7. serve as a clearinghouse for communications and dissemination of materials and information.

8. spearhead the acquisition and the implementation of graduate courses desired by area educators and vital to receiving the certification endorsement for serving as a supervising teacher.

Objectives for Program participants

Each identified pre-student teacher will:

1. participate in an orientation to teacher education through discussion which includes the teacher education program and its requirements, employment possibilities and trends, and an overview of the field-based experience.

2. be provided the opportunity to participate in a program designed to develop an awareness of the role of the Teacher Education Center in the field-based experiences and the available selected teacher education resource materials.

3. become actively involved in planned, approved clinical experiences with children in a formal setting.

4. be provided counseling services related to teacher education for the purpose of aiding the prospective teacher in determining realistic career goals.

Each student teacher will:

1. be assigned to a selected supervising teacher (s) in a public school situation which will contribute optimally to the student teacher's professional and personal needs.

2. participate in programs which provide enrichment opportunities for professional growth: i.e., conferences with guidance counselors, cooperative seminars/skillshops, interschool visits, orientation seminars, and the September experience.

3. be made aware of teacher education resource materials available through the Teacher Education Center.

Teachers cooperating with pre-student teaching placement will:

1. receive orientation and procedural guidelines through inservice.

2. be given the opportunity to become acquainted with the Association of Teacher Educators(ATE), an organization for personnel engaged in the professional development of those who enter the teaching profession.

Personnel supervising student teachers will:

1. upon accepting a student teacher, agree to participate in inservice programs designed to enhance competencies for effectively supervising a student teacher.

2. be afforded the opportunity to glean the latest in educational trends/techniques being advocated by the nation's authorities in teacher education.

3. be encouraged to enroll in graduate courses designed to improve competencies in influencing the behavior of the prospective teacher.

4. be given the opportunity to become acquainted with ATE.

The principal participating in the Center program will:

1. assist in the placement of student teachers within the school.

2. provide an orientation to the school for the student teachers.

3. visit classes where student teachers are assigned to foster professional development.

4. cooperate with the Center staff and the college supervisors in maintaining an effective teacher education program.

MCTEC PROGRAMS

In recent years, professional literature related to the education of teachers has contained increasing criticism and outright condemnation of some long-standing practices. Today, the concept of laboratory experiences is changing from the one-shot terminal assignment as a student teacher to that of a varied and ongoing series of professional experiences.

The rationale for providing for extended educational experiences with children at an early stage in the teacher preparation program rests upon several assumptions, each a result of many years of discussion and observation of current practices.

1. Professional laboratory experiences prior to the final semester of student teaching provide an opportunity for answering the question: "Do I really want to teach?" Public school classroom activities offer the prospective teacher opportunities for observing and learning first-hand, not vicariously, what it means "to teach." The participant can decide whether teaching is the vocation to pursue, thus utilizing the experience as a means of self-screening.

2. More importantly, experiences which afford opportunities for the translation of "classroom theory into practice" give added meaning to lectures, readings, discussions, and other academic activities. The probability is increased that students of teaching will construct a personal vantage point for viewing the role of the teacher with greater clarity. Students of teaching move forward, confident that they will be able to assume the role and responsibilities of teaching.

3. Bridging the gap between academic theory and on-the-job application helps the student of teaching acquire and demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for campus studies. Courses of study often assume new purpose and meaning. Positive and realistic attitudes toward teachers and teaching are generally evident.

Obviously, mere increase in the number of activities in which prospective teachers participate is no indication of a quality program; however, earlier, planned, sequential experiences with public school teachers and children can be a viable means for broadening the base of professional training for students of teaching, while providing greater depth in preparation.

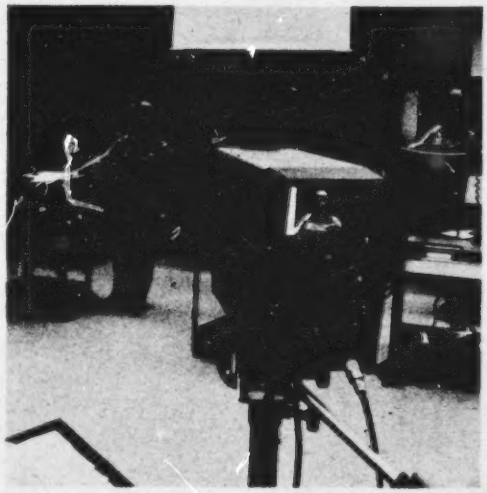
The MCTEC program is designed to provide a sequence of professional experiences for prospective teachers and staff development for participating public school and college personnel.

Pre-Student Teaching Laboratory Experiences

Locally, the MCTEC assists college-based personnel with the task of arranging practical **laboratory** and **clinical** experiences for the student of teaching.

Bluefield State College Education students are introduced to teacher training through systematic observation of varied public school classrooms. After these observational experiences, the student of teaching is ready for an assignment as an instructional tutor. These professional experiences involve conferences between public school and college personnel.

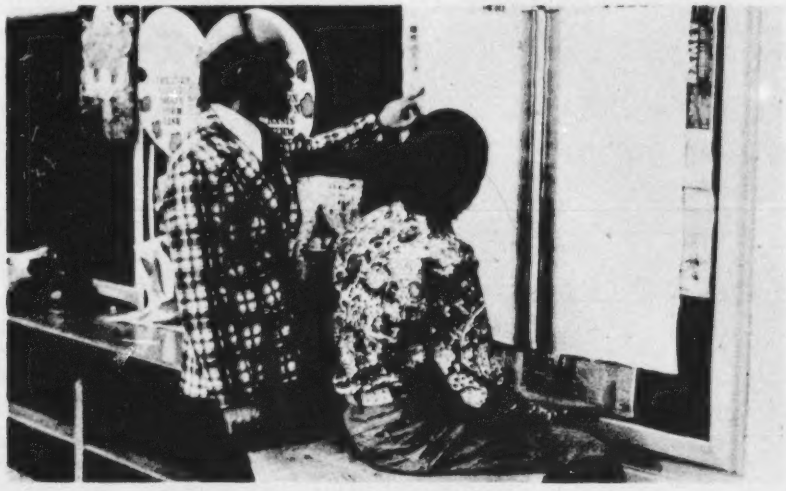
Concord College students of teaching perform service-related experiences as a prerequisite for professional education courses. As a corollary to the basic educational psychology course, each student of teaching engages in a "college-aide" experience as an active participant in public school classroom activities.

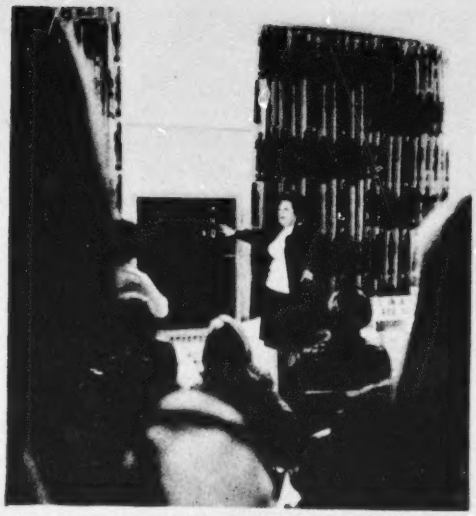


Students of both colleges participate in a final semester of professional education. Classes in general and special methods precede a period of full-time student teaching.

Student Teaching Placement

Placement of a student teacher in the public schools is guided by the student's needs and expressed interests. Primary consideration is given to placing the student teacher with a carefully selected supervising teacher and in a situation which will contribute to his personal and professional growth. Placement is determined following an interview with the student teacher and consultation among college directors of educational services, the special methods instructors, public school administrative personnel and supervisory staff, the principal, and the supervising teacher.





Enrichment Experiences for Student Teachers

Additionally, MCTEC provides the student teacher the opportunity to participate in enrichment programs for professional growth.

The **September Experience** provides the student teacher a unique view of the school and the classroom during the beginning of a school year.

The **Orientation to MCTEC** is designed to acquaint the student teacher with the services available through MCTEC.

Special Methods Observations are cooperatively arranged with the public schools and provide the student teacher an opportunity to observe varied approaches in their own discipline.

Conferences with Guidance Counselors are arranged for the student teacher in cooperation with the county director of guidance and public school counselors. The conferences provide the student teacher an opportunity to become aware of (1) the role of the guidance counselor, (2) the county testing program, (3) the resources available through the office of the counselor, (4) the cumulative record and its uses, and (5) referral techniques.

Skillshops, planned by and for the student teachers, are designed to strengthen professional competencies and to provide useful and practical suggestions for classroom utilization. The topics for the skillshops are selected by the student planning committee, and are based on needs indicated by the student teachers. Past topics have included "Developing Learning Stations," "Bulletin Boards as an Effective Teaching Tool," "Questioning Techniques," and "Rights and Responsibilities of Students."

Inservice/Continuing Education Programs

Inservice/Continuing Education Programs are an essential element of the Center program and focus on staff development for participating public school and college personnel. Through the input of classroom teachers, students, supervisory and administrative personnel, mutual areas of concern/interest are identified for study in the regularly scheduled inservice programs. The Center utilizes the professional staffs and faculties of Mercer County Schools, Bluefield State College, and Concord College, and nationally known educators as consultants for programs on staff development.

The various programs include:

1. **Inservice for Cooperating Teachers** is designed to enhance the supervisory competencies of teachers involved in the pre-student teaching program. College and Center personnel serve as consultants for inservice involving orientation and procedural guidelines for program development and implementation.

2. **Orientation for New Supervising Teachers** enables the teacher to identify roles and responsibilities and to develop the competencies needed as partners in teacher preparation. This orientation is conducted each semester at the TEC; program participants include the Center Coordinator, who serves as moderator, and college personnel, who explore the roles and responsibilities of supervising teachers.

3. **Regional Inservice for Supervising Teachers**, scheduled in each county where student teachers are placed, emphasizes the roles and responsibilities of supervising teachers.

4. **Inservice for Supervising Teachers** consists of two full-day programs per year. Participants include supervising teachers and principals who are currently participating in the teacher education program. The programs keep supervisory personnel aware of current trends in teacher education and are designed to strengthen their skills and competencies in working with student teachers.

Information Dissemination

Effective communication is the key to successful operation of a system which includes numerous persons and personalities. The Mercer County Teacher Education Center strives to keep all involved persons informed. The Center serves as a clearinghouse for new ideas and innovative trends, particularly in teacher preparation.

Every Center activity includes an evaluation which is a vital communication link in strengthening and re-evaluating Center programs. Needs assessment determines directions.

Professional Materials and Services

MCTEC maintains a library of professional and curricular materials for use by students and teachers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPERVISING TEACHERS

by I. L. Mitchell

The Mercer County Teacher Education Center believes the education of teachers must be accomplished through a partnership of the public schools and the colleges, relying on joint finances and policy determination by the participating agencies.

Approval, affection, and security are basic needs of human existence. Translated into the world of the student of teaching, a primary expectation is the need to be wanted and accepted. Supervising teachers should examine their personal philosophy to determine whether they are able to assume the responsibility for a student of teaching with a basic attitude providing for acceptance and approval. It is the responsibility of a teacher education center to cooperate with the public schools and the teacher education institutions to assign students of teaching where this atmoshpere exists or can be created.

Students of teaching should meet the principal, become acquainted with the school system, school building, support personnel, and administrative rules and regulations. It is necessary for supervising teachers to plan for the arrival of the student of teaching both with the pupils and with the administration and faculty. Students of teaching should not be left alone but should be accepted as co-workers. Initially, they should learn the names of the pupils, become familiar with equipment, supplies, curriculum, and instructional materials. Induction into instructional tasks should be developmentally sequenced, beginning with the observation.

Observation should be a time for analysis of teaching-learning situations. These experiences will be more effective when suggestions are made to guide observations. The supervising teacher should identify sequences of materials previously presented as well as projected plans for units of study noting possible units for which special preparation should be made. It is beneficial for the student of teaching to observe other teaching-learning situations at the close of the experience.

Supervising teachers should assist in the identification of instructional goals for students and students of teaching. The cooperating institutions will help determine the competencies for the students of teaching. As an example: students of teaching should demonstrate that they have the ability to recognize the level of achievement of each student and be able to provide appropriate experiences for continuous growth.

Careful and adequate planning should be maintained by students of teaching from the initial contact to the completion of the experience. Although supervising teachers often give the impression of having done little planning, the opposite is actually true; they have planned initially with unusual care. Students of teaching must realize that is is necessary to plan in detail. Careful planning enhances the

mastery of subject matter, provides experience in definite procedures, increases confidence, develops organizational ability, and leads to effective classroom control. Plans should provide instructional objectives that are practical, useful, measurable, and economical of time. Continuous planning is essential for instructional effectiveness.

Evaluation of the progress of the student of teaching, by the supervising teacher, must be made in terms of stated goals. Improvement of the performance of the student of teaching will occur only if strengths and weaknesses are identified. To be effective, evaluation must be accomplished in a manner that personally involves the student of teaching. Frequently planned conferences based upon mutual trust and understanding and a willingness on the part of the student of teaching to modify behavior will result in improved teaching.

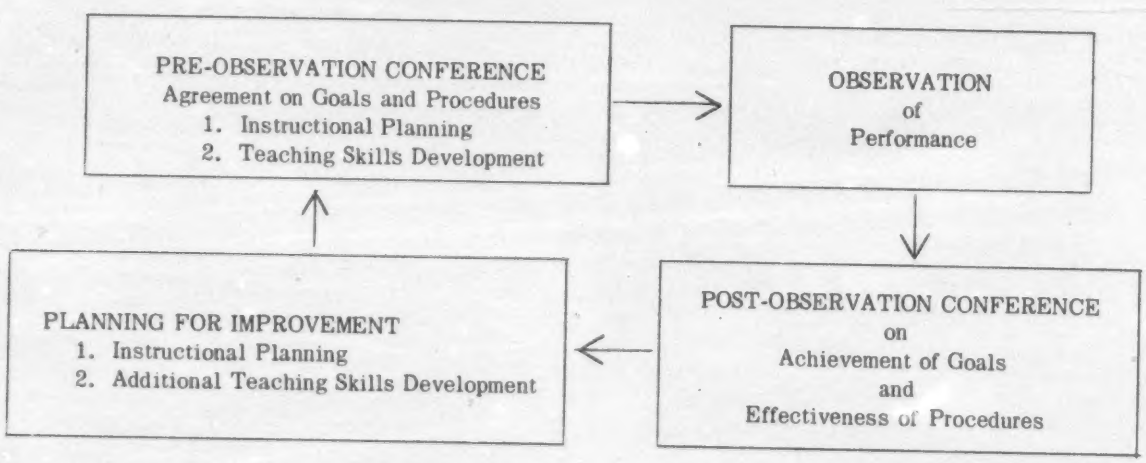
Supervising the professionalization of the student of teaching is a complex task. While supervising teachers must provide leadership in the utilization of specific instructional techniques, they must also be humanistically involved.

Conferences: Opening Doors to Improved Performance

by L. Jack Kaufman

The expanded utilization of laboratory experiences in teacher training programs has proven to be an effective contribution to the professionalization of students of teaching. Opportunities for the application of theory in realistic situations, with the guidance of involved teachers, are invaluable. The teacher that supervises any laboratory experience is the key to the effectiveness of that teacher training component. Laboratory experiences, by their nature, must be a joint effort of the supervising teacher and the student of teaching.

The conference which creates an atmosphere of open communication allows the student of teaching to profit from the supervising teacher's experience and insight. A model for the use of conferences to improve the effectiveness of laboratory experiences may be visualized in the following manner:



A MODEL FOR THE USE OF CONFERENCES TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LABORATORY EXPERIENCES

The Pre-Observation Conference

The basic purpose of any laboratory experience is to provide an opportunity for the student of teaching to utilize educational theory in practice. However, the broad nature of educational practice is such that it is difficult to judge effective applications in such global terms. The identification of specified goals and procedures, within the context of limited instructional sequences, provides an appropriate basis for evaluation. Specific, expressed agreements establish guidelines for the concentration of effort by both the student of teaching and the supervising teacher. Such explicit guidelines make possible an atmosphere of security and confidence for the participants in the laboratory experience.

Observation of Performance

The observation of performance should evaluate the attainment of the agreed upon goals and the effectiveness of the demonstrated procedures. Objective data can be collected to support this evaluation. Specifically, the supervising teacher should evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson plan and the presentation skills of the student of teaching.

Post-Observation Conference

The post-observation conference should be a discussion of what was observed. The purpose of this conference must be to promote self-evaluation by the student of teaching. Self-recognition of strengths and weaknesses is the major force for improved performance. Critical examination of objective data by the student of teaching provides the basis for intelligent behavioral changes.

Planning for Improvement

Instructional improvement will best be achieved when there is a specific plan for improvement. No single laboratory experience has fulfilled its purpose until it serves as the basis for the increased effectiveness of future performance. The recognition of strengths and weaknesses by the student of teaching, and the experience and insight of the supervising teacher should be successfully combined in an acceptable plan for improvement.

Identified goals for future instructional planning and the additional development of presentation skills will be an outgrowth of past performances. Through planning for improvement we have, in essence, identified specific goals and procedures which will become the basis for the next pre-observation conference. This spiral of achievement, so dependent on effective communication, is the ideational goal of laboratory experiences.

Mercer County Association of Teacher Educators

by Paul J. Morgan
Irene M. Pauley

The Mercer County unit of the Association of Teacher Educators, contributes directly and indirectly to the operation of the Mercer County Teacher Education Center. In a general way, the spirit of fellowship and common purpose cultivated by the local ATE, encourages educational personnel at all levels to be more accessible. This good-will often lessens the effort required of Center staff to convince prospective supervising teachers, principals, and others that value can be derived from working with pre-service and student teachers.

In a more direct way, the Executive Committee of the ATE, which performs the majority of business for the Unit, stands ready to advise and assist the Center in realizing its objectives.

The following information, gleaned from a WVATE Local Unit Development Committee report gives insight into the merit of a local ATE unit.

The Organization is open to:

1. public-school supervising/cooperating teachers who have participated in directing the work of pre-student and student teachers.
2. principals and Central Office personnel whose work is concerned with policies, assignments, organization, and administration or supervision or pre-student teachers and student teachers.
3. college-based personnel engaged in the professional or general education of those who enter the teaching profession.
4. student teachers who attend as guests of their supervising teacher.

Based on the success of the Mercer County ATE, the following suggestions for the formation of any local ATE unit are offered:

1. Develop a rationale.
2. Establish eligibility.
3. Survey potential membership.

4. Investigate ATE purposes, both national and state.

5. Develop each local organization as an autonomous unit.

6. Provide an atmosphere of fellowship by conducting business through an Executive Committee whose membership reflects equal representation from the participating institutions.

The purpose of this local unit of ATE is to promote social and professional interaction among those having common goals; however, in any case, it is recommended that a local unit not attempt to duplicate the role of the Teacher Education Center, but rather, to function as a teachers' group to stimulate and assist in maintaining positive peer-professional relationships.

EPILOGUE

Gayle Walthall Wise

Today, eight years after its beginning, the Center concept in southern West Virginia has emerged as a model in teacher education illustrating the positive results that occur when public schools and colleges pool their leadership, finances, and expertise to develop a program to prepare teachers.

While the Center program has expanded, the original purpose for which the Center was designed, working together to prepare prospective teachers, has not changed.

Each institution has made contributions to the Center program; each institution has received numerous benefits.

Because the Teacher Education Center is a vital component in the teacher preparation program of two state colleges, the future of the Center seems assured. While the focus of the Center may change to keep pace with the current trends in education, the need to prepare teachers, in joint effort - on the campus and in the public schools - will remain.

Yes, the consortium is successful in southern West Virginia!